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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Sub-Commission on Prevention
of Discrimination and
Protection of Minorities
Fiftieth session
Item 1 (c) of the provisional agenda

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

METHODS OF WORK OF THE SUB-COMMISSION

Written statement submitted by North-South XXI, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[11 July 1998]

GE.98-13195 (E)

1. The work done by the Commission on Human Rights, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, and the various working groups makes a positive contribution to action to ensure respect for human rights. However, the resolutions adopted cannot, in general, escape the measures taken by the major Powers, or the dictators "protected" by the major Powers, which have powerful economic interests on the global market.

2. Consequently, the resolutions adopted lose their credibility and value in the eyes of international opinion. In parallel with the traditional practice of United Nations organs, it would appear desirable for the United Nations bodies, and in particular the Sub-Commission, in partnership with the non-governmental organizations, to examine the deep roots of human rights violations in order to ensure that no "remedies" are proposed without prior "diagnosis". Although underdevelopment appears to be closely linked to mass violations of human rights, the link does not seem automatic; violations are thus perpetrated by highly developed countries and the prevailing obscurantism is not unrelated to underdevelopment and uneven development.

3. It is therefore proposed that, in addition to the precise studies on specific points relating to discrimination and protection of minorities, the agenda should include an item on the study of the underlying causes of this discrimination and, consequently, the study of the means of prevention to be put in place.